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ABSTRACT

This book looks at the school voucher movement and its likely consequences for American education in future years. Based on an extensive, nationally representative survey, it explains that Americans are quite sympathetic to public education and are afraid to do anything that would harm public schools. Despite this, many surveyed also tend to think private schools are better and are quite open to the idea of educational vouchers. Survey findings indicate that the strongest support for vouchers comes from people who are socially less advantaged, members of minority groups, and residents of low-performing school districts. There are 10 chapters in two parts. Part 1, "Background," includes: (1) "The Politics of Vouchers"; (2) "Satisfaction with the Public Schools"; (3) "Why So Much Satisfaction?"; (4) "Explaining Satisfaction"; and (5) "The Attraction of Private Schools." Part 2, "Public Opinion on Vouchers," looks at: (6) "Who Knows about Vouchers?"; (7) "Support for Vouchers"; (8) "The Consequences of a Voucher System"; (9) "Regulating a Voucher System"; and (10) "Public Opinion, Politics, and the Future." Two appendixes explain the study and expand on why public opinion about public schools is high. (SM)

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